

# Middle School Gifted Education 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

Working to  
Explore and  
Expand



**Only the  
mediocre  
are always  
at their  
best.**

# What does GIFTED look like in middle school?

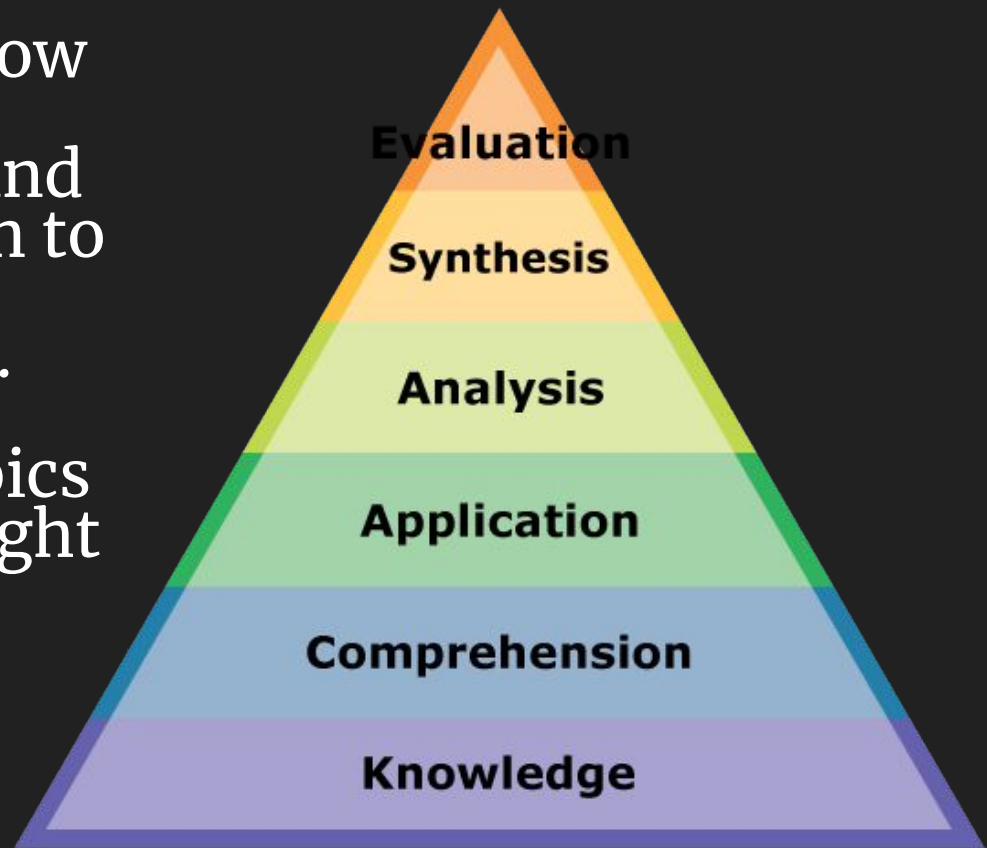
- We read material on a more challenging level
- Metacognition: Think about their thinking
- Social/Emotional needs are addressed and nurtured
- Greater depth and complexity
- More flexibility
- Advanced reading and thinking strategies
- Less drill
- Critical and Creative Thinking skills are strengthened
- **Gifted Specialists are trained to meet the vast needs of Gifted Students**

# College and Career Readiness Standards

Like all 7th graders, gifted students are taught according to the state adopted curriculum, which sets the goals and objectives for students to master.

# Higher Order Thinking Skills

7<sup>th</sup> graders will learn how to evaluate multiple sources/perspectives and synthesize information to establish original thoughts and thinking. They will grapple with complex materials/topics and analyze their thought process.



# Higher Order Thinking

- We go far beyond mere reading comprehension
- Students are asked to do analysis, synthesis, and evaluation
- Gifted students have passion projects and a genius hour to pursue independent learning
- Many units are interdisciplinary and allow students to dig deeper and make new connections

# Exiting the Comfort Zone...

- May be harder for the gifted than for others
- Often a little uncomfortable
- Sometimes a little frustrating
- Sometimes very uncertain
- Challenges assumptions
- Tests resilience
- Stretches potential



# Benefits:



- Able to attend classes with their intellectual peers
- Able to develop an awareness and appreciation for their gifts
- In these classes teachers not only enrich or extend learning, but they also recognize and address the unique abilities and social-emotional needs of the gifted student.

# Student Led Conferences

- Students created their digital portfolios this year that showcased all of their work and growth as a gifted student.
- Next year, we will continue to add to this and we will have another round of student led conferences!



# Gifted Education Plan

Concepts - Big ideas, topics

Essential Understandings - important things to know

Essential Questions - what we ask to get us to what we know

# Gifted Education Plan: Concept Based Learning

Content is taught within the context of a bigger idea.

Students will learn to generalize what they learn to other settings or content areas. Learning occurs as students construct knowledge using guiding questions and apply knowledge to other areas of study through essential understandings.

# Conceptual Lens

During the 2017–18 school year, the Gifted Education Department began to scaffold concepts to create the greatest impact for our students. The essential understandings for each concept were each designed to go full circle and each concept will build on an idea from the previous concept and year.

6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Fall: <b>Risk Taking</b> Spring: <b>Resilience</b>	Fall: <b>Perspectives</b> Spring: <b>Prejudice/Bias</b>	Fall: <b>Discernment</b> Spring: <b>Empowerment</b>

# Benefits of Scaffolding Concepts

- The concepts for each year compliment the standards and provide opportunities for increased diversity in reading materials and assignments while helping to connect interdisciplinary relationships.
- Designed to allow for richer, deeper understandings of the concepts and the material studied.
- Develops a solid foundation and appeals to the nature and needs of gifted students.

CONCEPTS  
for 7<sup>th</sup> Grade  
GRC

Perspectives  
and  
Prejudice/  
Bias

THERE ARE  
TWO SIDES  
TO EVERY  
STORY

# Why should students study the concepts of perspectives and prejudice/bias?

It is the bridge students cross to experience empowerment.

The goal of the Gifted Education Department is for students to take courageous risks and develop resilience to **explore perspectives** and **analyze bias** in order to discern information and ultimately cultivate a sense of empowerment to lead them to make confident decisions and act on credible information.

# Fall Semester: **PERSPECTIVES**

## Essential Understandings

- The willingness to listen and understand different perspectives requires an individual to take a risk and tolerate ambiguity.
- Perspectives influence a person's decision making, responses to situations, and interactions with others.
- Perspectives may be strengthened, changed, or broadened with new information or with new relationships.
- Differing perspectives can lead to conflict or conflict resolution.

Flexibility comes from having  
multiple choices; wisdom comes  
from having multiple perspectives.

— Robert Ditts —

Expose students to  
multiple perspectives;  
teach them to tolerate  
ambiguity so they can  
synthesize information  
and think on their own!





# Spring Semester: **PREJUDICE / BIAS**

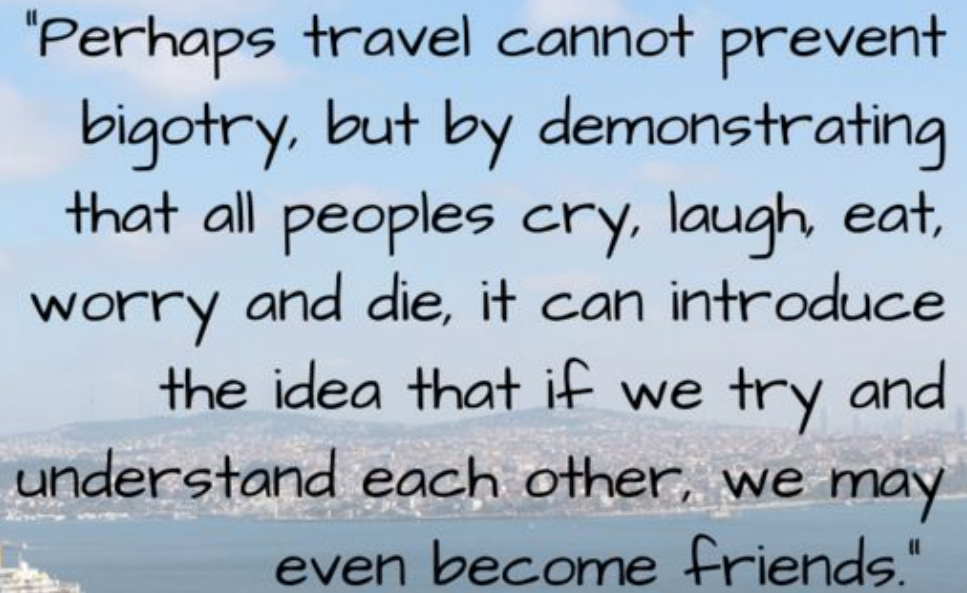
## Essential Understandings

- Prejudice and bias can be overcome through experiences with diverse perspectives.
- Courage comes from standing against prejudice/bias as others, even friends, participate.
- Bias is a result of prejudice and creates inequality and distrust.
- An individual's response to the causes and consequences of prejudice or bias reveal his/her morals, ethics, and values.
- Barriers created by prejudice/bias have fallen, and there are still barriers to bring down.

# Looking at the media with a Critical, Objective Eye



Students will begin to understand how fear and lack of information / one-sided information creates hatred, misunderstandings, and discord. They will hunt bias and identify author's purpose as well as possible deception.



"Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends."

- Dr. Maya Angelou

I can't promise my child a life without bias - we're all biased - but I promise to bias my child with multiple perspectives.

— K.K. Raghava —

# What you can do to help...

- Encourage your child to seek information from multiple sources and perspectives.
- Share differing viewpoints as a family and discuss why and how our perspectives drive family/personal decisions.
- Avoid immediately judging or disregarding your child's information or ideas. Embrace ambiguity!
- Pose questions to lead your child's thought process.
- Model well-informed decision making.
- Share any resources you come across that show 2 or more sides of a story. I'd love to build a solid resource center for my students filled with multiple perspectives.

# Reading is a MUST!

- No matter how busy you may think you are, you must find time for reading, or surrender yourself to self-chosen ignorance."  
- Confucius
- "We read to know we are not alone."  
- C.S. Lewis
- "The man who does not read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read."  
- Mark Twain

# Thank you for coming!

- Please sign the GEP in the lower left corner and date your signature.
- Put your child's FULL LEGAL NAME at the top.
- Keep one copy of the GEP for your records.